

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been canceled.

New claim 12 is being presented herein. Claim 12 is directed to the subject matter of original claim 1. The language of claim 12 clarifies what was originally presented in claim 1. No new matter is added. Applicant respectfully submits that these amendments are not intended to narrow the scope of the original claims, but are rather for precision of language and to explicitly recite within the claim what was believed to have already been implicitly defined therein.

Claims 6 and 11 have been amended to correct a typographical error.

Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 2-12 are pending.

Claims 6 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement.

In claims 6 and 11, the Examiner suggests that “sulfonamide” should be “sulfenamide.”

Applicants have amended claims 6 and 11 in accordance with the Examiner’s suggestion. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Applicants have presented new claim 12, which is directed to the subject matter of original claim 1. Applicants submit that claim 12 is clear and definite in view of the

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specification and clarifies the language of original claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

Claims 1 and 6-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over at least one of Laurent, U.S. Patent No. 4,963,207, Mitsuhashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,576,077, and Bekaert, GB 1,487,426 taken in view of Sandstrom et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,394,919 (“Sandstrom”) or Ravagnani et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,239,663 (“Ravagnani”).

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Laurent, U.S. Patent No. 4,963,207, Mitsuhashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,576,077, and Bekaert, GB 1,487,426 taken in view of Nakagawa et al., EP 481080 (“Nakagawa”) and optionally in view of at least one of Sharma, U.S. Patent No. 4,615,369 and Vasseur, U.S. Patent No. 5,871,597.

Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Laurent, U.S. Patent No. 4,963,207, Mitsuhashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,576,077, and Bekaert, GB 1,487,426 taken in view of Grimberg et al., US 2003/0221760 (“Grimberg”) or Uchino et al., US 2002/0088522 (“Uchino”).

The Examiner asserts that Laurent and Mitsuhashi disclose extruding and spirally winding various non-reinforced tire layers. The Examiner further asserts that Bekaert discloses extruding and spirally winding steel cord belt layers.

The Examiner acknowledges that none of Laurent, Mitsuhashi or Bekaert disclose the specific compounding rubber as claimed in the present claims.

The Examiner turns to Sandstrom, Ravagnani, Nakagawa, Sharma, Vasseur, Grimberg, and Uchino to supplement the deficiencies in Laurent, Mitsuhashi and Bekaert.

Applicants submit that the rubber composition claimed in claim 12 is not disclosed or suggested by any of the cited references. Therefore, the presently claimed invention is not obvious over Laurent, Mitsuhashi, and Bekaert, taken in view of Sandstrom or Ravagnani, or obvious over Laurent, Mitsuhashi, and Bekaert, taken in view of Nakagawa and optionally in view of at least one of Sharma, and Vasseur, or obvious over Laurent, Mitsuhashi and Bekaert, taken in view of Grimberg or Uchino.

The rubber composition as claimed in claim 12 has a low viscosity and a good workability, in particular, at the uncured state. In the present invention, this low viscosity rubber composition is used to form a belt by one of the methods, (1), (2), or (3) recited in claim 12.

Applicants submit that the rubber composition disclosed in Sandstrom and Ravagnani, as well as Nakagawa, Sharma, or Vasseur, is not the same as the claimed rubber composition. In particular, the rubber composition disclosed in Sandstrom and Ravagnani has a high viscosity in its uncured state. Due to its high viscosity, it is not possible to use the rubber composition to form a belt layer by any of the methods (1), (2), or (3), recited in claim 12. On the contrary, in order to coat the steel cords with this uncured rubber disclosed in Sandstrom and Ravagnani a calendering apparatus must be used.

Additionally, the viscosity of the claimed rubber composition is defined in claim 2 (according to ASTM D5099-93), which is not disclosed or taught by any of the cited references.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the claimed invention would not be obvious over any of the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

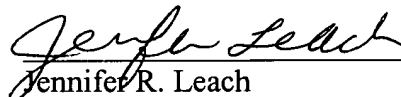
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